

VLR: 5-15-79 (58-66)
NRHP: 7-27-79

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Elm Hill

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
4 1/2 miles south of the intersection of U.S. 58 and State Route 4 overlooking Lake Gaston within Elm Hill State Game Management Area

CITY, TOWN

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Virginia

VICINITY OF

CODE
51

Fifth (W. C. Daniel)

COUNTY
Mecklenburg

CODE
117

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Commonwealth of Virginia, Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries
James F. McInteer, Executive Director

STREET & NUMBER

4010 West Broad Street

CITY, TOWN

Richmond

VICINITY OF

STATE

Virginia 23230

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Mecklenburg County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Boydton

STATE

Virginia

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS (2) (See Continuation Sheet #1)

TITLE
(1) Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory

DATE

1958

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

D. C.

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The large frame house at Elm Hill was built ca. 1800 on a hilltop site overlooking the Roanoke River. The river basin at this point is now the upstream portion of Lake Gaston with the John H. Kerr Dam as a backdrop. Elm Hill consists of a central two-story, three-bay element flanked by one-story, one-bay wings, and backed by a two-story, two-bay ell, all of which appear to date from the same construction period.

The body of the house is clad with molded weatherboards and glazed with 9/9 sash in the main block and 9/6 sash in the wings. Set on rubble stone underpinnings, the house is heated by massive chimneys at either end of the main block. The chimneys, built of coursed pink sandstone blocks, are square in profile and decorated at the top with corbelled caps. Modern one-story porches shelter the front of the main block and the doors in the end of each wing. Each section is covered with a gable roof trimmed with a box cornice, but an old photograph shows that the wings once had hipped ends.

The plan of Elm Hill is a simple one. There is a single room in each of the wings and the ell, the latter containing the stair. The main block has a hall-parlor plan with the hall to the east. Each of the four front rooms has a mantel with an architrave surround and a heavy molded shelf with pulvinated frieze, but the mantel in the hall is distinguished from the others by a dentil base molding applied to the shelf.

All five rooms had wooden cornices, flush wainscoting and elaborate asymmetrical chair rail, but the wainscoting has been removed from the ell. The closed-string stair consists of a molded rail, a plain square newel, and square balusters set diagonally. The string is unadorned and the wainscot is carried up the stairs. There is no evidence of other original decoration. The house has been vacant and untended for over a decade and is in a state of deterioration.

Two early outbuildings of interest survive: a pair of smokehouses which stand about 50 yards northeast of the house. The near one is a square double-studded framed building with a pyramidal hipped roof and an elaborate finial. It may be contemporary with the house. The more distant of the two is a gable-roofed building made of logs joined at the corners with half-dovetail notching and covered with beaded weatherboards. It was probably built in the mid-19th century.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1800

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Elm Hill, built ca. 1800, is one of the earliest surviving houses in the Roanoke River basin. It is set on a rise which, due to construction of major dams on the river, now overlooks Lake Gaston and Buggs Island Lake (John H. Kerr Reservoir). The house is notable for its T-shaped plan, striking pink sandstone chimneys, fine mantels and chair rails, and for the profusion of original sash and other interior trim. Elm Hill is further significant for its connection with the family of Sir Peyton Skipwith, a distinguished early settler of the area who established Prestwould, Southside Virginia's best-known 18th-century plantation complex.

Elm Hill was originally part of the holdings of Hugh Miller, a resident of Prince George County and the father-in-law of Sir Peyton. When he died in England in 1763, Miller's property passed to his daughters Anne and Jean, respectively, Skipwith's first and second wives. It seems likely that Miller erected a house on his Mecklenburg property before his death and that the Skipwiths resided there when they moved to Mecklenburg from Prince George County in 1769.

In 1772, they were living at Skipwith's "Westland" tract. By 1788 Skipwith, whose wife Anne had died in 1779, had moved to Prestwould and was courting his sister-in-law, now resident at Elm Hill. Marriage followed soon afterward.

The records suggest that Elm Hill belonged to Anne Miller Skipwith and descended from her not to Sir Peyton but to his son Peyton, Jr. In 1801 the son deeded the land to his father, but there is no earlier deed for that tract from the father to the son. Furthermore, a 1799 deed refers to the Elm Hill tract, while the 1801 document speaks of Elm Hill Plantation. This semantic change, coupled with the architectural evidence, strongly implies that the younger Skipwith, who had recently reached majority, replaced the original with the present house between 1799 and 1801. The interior woodwork at Elm Hill resembles that of other houses of the 1790s in the area, notably Flat Rock in neighboring Lunenburg County.

After Sir Peyton's death, his widow, Lady Jean Skipwith, gave Elm Hill to her son Humbertson Skipwith in 1812. The latter in turn left the property to his daughter, Selina S. Coles, when he died in 1865. Now owned by the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries, the house is unused and deteriorating.

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Elm Hill, Mecklenburg County, Virginia

CONTINUATION SHEET #1

ITEM NUMBER 6

PAGE 1

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

- (2) Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey
1968, 1974, 1975 State
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission
221 Governor Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

OF VIRGINIA
L RESOURCES
ATE GEOLOGIST

JOHN H. KERR DAM QUADRANGLE
VIRGINIA-NORTH CAROLINA
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
SE/4 BOYDTON 15' QUADRANGLE

5357 II NW
(SOUTH HILLS)

(LE) 4 MI. TO U.S. 58 742: 17'30" 743 744 2070 000 FEET (VA.) 745 78°15' 36°37'30"

U.S.G.S. 7.5' quadrangle (Scale 1:24,000)
John H. Kerr Dam, Va-NC 1968 (FR 1974)

ELM HILL, Mecklenburg County, Virginia
UTM References
17/742050/4054880

